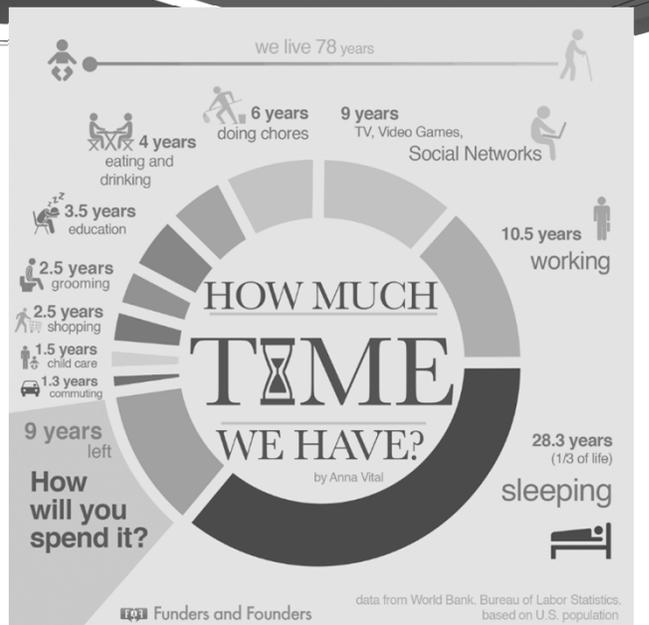


What do we live for?

The Literary Prophets
Week 2

Dr. Keith Lloyd
Professor of English
Kent State University Stark
kslloyd@kent.edu

- Based on this chart, if we live 78 years, everything is accounted for but 9 years.
- What will you spend them on?
- Will you lessen the other percentages?



What Our 7 Billion World Population Does [Infographic] <https://blog.adioma.com/what-7-billion-world-population-does-infographic/>

A thought experiment

- Consider the day of your own demise. What would you most miss about life?
- That is what you *live* for.
- What we fear losing reflects our deepest desire.

What we value and fear directs the direction in life – it dictates our “future.”



What do we live for?

- What we prioritize in the present therefore is an accurate prediction of our future.
- My friend: “No true “fortune teller” will tell you your future. They will tell you **what will happen if you keep going the way you are.**”
- The **prophets** attempted to **pick up the “strings of the present”** and **“trace where they led”** (my professor, Robert Johnson).

Though we associate prophets with predicting distant future events, *most of their predictions were to take place in their lifetimes.*

After all, if there is no verification, then what good is the prophecy?

Period of the “Literary” Prophets

Chronological List of Prophets in the Old Testament

The Prophets	The Dates	Bible History	Kings and Events
Prophets of Israel			
Jonah	810-790 BC	2 Kings 13:14	Jehoash, Jeroboam II (Amaziah)
Joel	790-760 BC	2 Kings 11-15	Uzziah
Amos	780-760 BC	2 Kings 14:15	Jeroboam II (Uzziah)
Hosea	785-725 BC	2 Kings 15:18	Jeroboam II to Hoshea (Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz)
Prophets of Judah			
Prophets of Israel			
Jonah			
Joel			
Amos			
Hosea			
Isaiah			
Micah			
Prophets of the Captivity			
[Daniel]			
Obediah			
Ezekiel			
Prophets of the Return To Jerusalem			
Haggai	520-518 BC	Ezra 5:6	Rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem (Reign of Darius I)
Zechariah	520-510 BC	Ezra 5:6	Rebuilding and Dedication of the Temple (Reign of Darius I)
Malachi	420-397 BC	Nehemiah 13	Second Reformation by Nehemiah (Reign of Artaxerxes I)

This week we focus on one Major (the larger books) Prophets from each period. We look at three specific passages about the choices we make and the role of the prophet.

(Reign of Nebuchadnezzar)

Chronology of the Prophets in the Old Testament.
Bible History Online
<https://www.bible-history.com/old-testament/prophets->

(First) Isaiah – Imagistic Prophet

- a prophet, priest, and statesman
- lived during the last years of the northern kingdom and during the reigns of four kings of Judah: Uzziah (Azariah), Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.
- a contemporary of the prophets of social justice: Amos, Hosea, and Micah.
- added themes peculiar to his prophetic mission.
- To kings, political and economic leaders, and to the people of the land,
 - the holiness of Yahweh
 - the coming Messiah of Yahweh
 - the judgment of Yahweh
 - the necessity of placing one’s own and the nation’s trust in Yahweh rather than in the might of ephemeral movements and nations.
- First Isaiah “influenced the course of Judah’s history (from 742 to 687 BCE) by his oracles of destruction, judgment, and hope as well as his messages containing both threats and promises.

Encyclopedia Britannica “Biblical literature” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/biblical-literature/Isaiah#ref597764>

Tell us pleasant things (First) Isaiah 30

⁸ *Go now, write it on a tablet for them,
inscribe it on a scroll,
that for the days to come
it may be an everlasting witness.*

⁹ For these are rebellious people, deceitful children, children unwilling to listen to the LORD's instruction.

This passage reflects the transition from oral to literate culture from last week's talk.

¹⁰ They say to the seers,
"See no more visions!"
and to the prophets,
"Give us no more visions of what is right!
*Tell us pleasant things,
prophesy illusions.*
¹¹ *Leave this way,
get off this path,
and stop confronting us
with the Holy One of Israel!"*

It also shows part of the motivation for writing – the words become a witness to the veracity of the prophet.

Be careful what you rely on

- ¹² Therefore this is what the Holy One of Israel says:

- "Because you have rejected this message,
*relied on oppression
and depended on deceit,*

¹³ this sin will become for you
like a high wall, cracked and bulging,
that collapses suddenly, in an instant.

¹⁴ It will break in pieces like pottery,
shattered so mercilessly
that among its pieces not a fragment will be found
for taking coals from a hearth
or scooping water out of a cistern."

Note the metaphorical imagery used by the prophets mentioned in last week's talk.

“The waiting is the hardest part”

- ¹⁵ This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says:

- ***“In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.***

¹⁶ You said, ‘No, we will flee on horses.’

Therefore you will flee!

You said, ‘We will ride off on swift horses.’

Therefore your pursuers will be swift!

¹⁷ A thousand will flee

at the threat of one;

at the threat of five

you will all flee away,

till you are left

like a flagstaff on a mountaintop,

like a banner on a hill.”

PATIENCE
IS NOT THE
ABILITY TO WAIT
BUT HOW YOU
ACT WHILE YOU'RE
WAITING

¹⁸ Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you;

therefore he will rise up to

show you compassion.

For the LORD is a God of justice.

Blessed are all who wait for him!

Hoot Mama Locketts: The Waiting is the Hardest Part
...hootmamalocketts.blogspot.com

Who are your “teachers”?

- ¹⁹ People of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you.
- ²⁰ Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, **your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them.** ²¹ Whether you turn to the right or to the left, **your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”**

A good
teacher is like
a candle - it
consumes
itself to light
the way for
others
- unknown

teachingwithsimplicity.com

189 best images about Teachers Inspirational Thoughts on ...pinterest.com

Jeremiah - visual prophet

- Began to prophesy about 626 bce during the reign of the Judaeen king Josiah.
- From the town of Anathoth and probably from the priestly family of Eli, this prophet, who may have been instrumental in the Deuteronomic reform, dictated his oracles to his secretary Baruch.



Only a youth in his late teens when he experienced the call by Yahweh to be a “prophet to the nations,”

Jeremiah was a hesitant reforming prophet, experiencing **deep spiritual struggles regarding his adequacy** from the very beginning of his call and throughout his prophetic ministry.

Encyclopedia Britannica “Biblical literature” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/biblical-literature/Isaiah#ref597764>

Jeremiah

- After the death of Josiah in 609 bce, however, he became an outspoken prophet against the national policy of Judah, a policy that he knew would lead to the disaster that came to be called the Babylonian Exile.
- Because of his prophecies, which were unpopular with the military and the revolutionists against the Babylonians, Jeremiah was kidnapped by conspirators after 586 and taken to Egypt, where he disappeared.

Jeremiah's visual rhetoric

- Jeremiah 27: 1 Early in the reign of Zedekiah ^a son of Josiah king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 2 This is what the Lord said to me: “Make a yoke out of straps and crossbars and put it on your neck. . .
- **But if any nation will bow its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let that nation remain in its own land to till it and to live there, declares the LORD.”**”



Image: « Obeying Babylon A Great Calm » **False Confidence**. September 6, 2014 by Sarah Myers.
<https://thecounttimes.com/2014/09/06/false-confidence/>

Jeremiah 28

- ⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah before the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD.
- ⁶ He said, “Amen! May the LORD do so! May the LORD fulfill the words you have prophesied by bringing the articles of the LORD’s house and all the exiles back to this place from Babylon.
- ⁷ Nevertheless, listen to what I have to say in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: ⁸ From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms.
- ⁹ **But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true.”**

- ¹⁰ Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and broke it, ¹¹ and he said before all the people, “This is what the LORD says: ‘In the same way I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon off the neck of all the nations within two years.’” **At this, the prophet Jeremiah went on his way.**

<http://www.thecrossfiles.wordpress.com/2014/02/17-weigel-engraving-hananiah-28bb.jpg>

The yoke's on you

- ¹² After the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:
- ¹³ “Go and tell Hananiah, ‘This is what the LORD says: You have broken a wooden yoke, but **in its place you will get a yoke of iron.**’
- ¹⁴ This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: I will put an iron yoke on the necks of all these nations to make them serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they will serve him. I will even give him control over the wild animals.”

Proof of the pudding ...

- ¹⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, **“Listen, Hananiah! The LORD has not sent you, yet you have persuaded this nation to trust in lies.**
- ¹⁶ Therefore this is what the LORD says: **‘I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This very year you are going to die, because you have preached rebellion against the LORD.’”**
- ¹⁷ In the seventh month of that same year, Hananiah the prophet died.



<https://signoftherose.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/12-amiens-breaking-of-jeremiahs-yoke-jer-28.jpg>

Ezekiel - visionary prophet

- “Undoubtedly one of the leaders of Jerusalem because he was among the first group of exiles to go into captivity—those who were forced to leave their homeland about 597 bce in a deportation to Babylon on the orders of the conquering king Nebuchadrezzar.
- Belonging to the priestly class, perhaps of the line of Zadok, Ezekiel was a spiritual leader of his fellow exiles at Tel-abib, which was located near the river Chebar, a canal that was part of the Euphrates River irrigation system.
- According to his own account, Ezekiel, the priest without a temple, received the call to become a prophet during a vision “In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day”—perhaps July 31, 593 bce, if the dating is based on the lunar calendar, though the exact meaning of “thirtieth year” remains obscure.”

Encyclopedia Britannica “Biblical literature” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/biblical-literature/Isaiah#ref597764>

Ezekiel

- A married man who was often consulted by elders among the exiles, Ezekiel carried out his priestly and prophetic career during two distinct periods:
 - (1) from 593–586 bce, a date that was doubly depressing for the prophet because it was the period when his wife died and his native city was destroyed; and
 - (2) from 586–571 bce, the date of his last oracle (chapter 29, verse 17).
- The personality of the prophet shows through his oracles, visions, and narrations.

Encyclopedia Britannica “Biblical literature” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/biblical-literature/Isaiah#ref597764>



- **1**And he said to me, “Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel.” **2**So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat.

Ezekiel eats a scroll Ezekiel 3



- **3**Then he said to me, “Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.” So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.
- **4**He then said to me: “Son of man, go now to the people of Israel and speak my words to them

Ezekiel's "Muteness" Ezekiel 3

- 25 And you, son of man, they will tie with ropes, and you will be bound so that you cannot go out among the people.
- 26 I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth, and you will be silent and unable to rebuke them, though they are a rebellious house.
- **27 But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you are to tell them, 'This is what the Lord GOD says.' Whoever listens, let him listen; and whoever refuses, let him refuse; for they are a rebellious house....**

Ezekiel loses his wife

- **"Then the word of the Lord came to me: 'Son of man, I am about to take the delight of your eyes away from you with a fatal blow.'" (24:15-16, cf 18)**
- Ezekiel's wife is described in similar terms to Issac when Abraham was called to offer him as a sacrifice (Genesis 22).
- **But you must not lament or weep or let you tears flow. Groan quietly; do not observe mourning rites for the dead. Put on your turban and strap your sandals on your feet; do not cover your mustache or eat the bread of mourners." (24:17)**

Ezekiel Lesson 4: "When Tragedy Hits Home"
 FSBC Bible Study.org
http://www.fsbc Bible Study.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1650:ezekiel-lesson-4-when-tragedy-hits-home



Evidently Ezekiel lost his wife on the same day as the Jews lost Jerusalem. Because the people to whom he was prophesying were captive in Babylon, they could not mourn publicly for that could have been interpreted as rebellion. Because the destruction of Jerusalem was a sovereign act of God's judgment, the people were not to outwardly mourn it.

His loss symbolic

- “Son of man, know that on the day I take their stronghold from them, their pride and joy, the delight of their eyes and the longing of their hearts, as well as their sons and daughters, on that day a fugitive will come to you and report the news.
- ***On that day your mouth will be opened to talk with him; you will speak and no longer be mute. So you will be a sign for them, and they will know that I am Yahweh.”*** (24:25-27)

“Time is on my side”

Ezekiel 4

- ...3Then take an iron plate and set it up as an iron wall between yourself and the city. Turn your face toward it so that it is under siege, and besiege it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.
- 4Then lie down on your left side and place the iniquity of the house of Israel upon yourself. You are to bear their iniquity for the number of days you lie on your side.
- 5For I have assigned you the years of their iniquity according to the number of days you lie down, 390 days; so you will bear the iniquity of the house of Israel....

“Ezekiel chapter four records the account of the ‘**son of man**’ being commanded by God to lay on his left side for 390 days and then to lay on his right side for 40 days in order to represent the years of iniquity by the house of Israel and the house of Judah and to bear their sin for these periods.”

Mark S. Haughwout. “Ezekiel’s time on his side.”
Readings in Classical Prophecy Dr. Baruch Schwartz
Hebrew University - Rothberg International School
Spring 2003 Updated: 20 April 2016 Copyright 2016 -
Mark S. Haughwout - all rights reserved
http://markhaughwout.com/Bible/Ezekiel_on_his_side.htm

Actions speak



“street theater” Karastahan
 December 2, 2014 Albay Theater Arts
<https://karastahan.wordpress.com/tag/street-theater/>

Ezekiel prophet of the Exile

- Ezekiel was a master preacher who drew large crowds and a good administrator of his religious community of exiles.
- He held out hope for a temple in a new age in order to inspire a people in captivity.
- He also initiated a form of imagery and literature that was to have profound effects on both Judaism and Christianity all the way to the 20th century:
- apocalypticism (the view that God would intervene in history to save the believing remnant and that this intervention would be accompanied by dramatic, cataclysmic events).

Encyclopedia Britannica “Biblical literature” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/biblical-literature/Isaiah#ref597764>

Ezekiel 12

- ²¹ The word of the LORD came to me: ²² “Son of man, what is **this proverb you have in the land of Israel: ‘The days go by and every vision comes to nothing’?**”
- ²³ Say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am going to put an end to this proverb, and they will no longer quote it in Israel.’ Say to them, ‘**The days are near when every vision will be fulfilled.** ²⁴ **For there will be no more false visions or flattering divinations among the people of Israel.**’
- ²⁵ But I the LORD will speak what I will, and **it shall be fulfilled without delay.** For in your days, you rebellious people, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign LORD.’”

Back to the future

- ²⁶ The word of the LORD came to me: ²⁷ “*Son of man, the Israelites are saying, ‘The vision he sees is for many years from now, and he prophesies about the distant future.’*”
- ²⁸ “Therefore say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: **None of my words will be delayed any longer; whatever I say will be fulfilled, declares the Sovereign LORD.**’”

Summaries

Isaiah

- Seek the truth, not the “pleasant”
- Be careful what you rely on.
- Learn to wait.
- Who are your teachers?

Jeremiah

- Age doesn't matter, but timing does.
- Any damn fool can see when a war is coming, but if you are going to predict peace, you had better be right.
- How you react now could make it better or worse.
- You will know them by their fruits.

Ezekiel

- Before you speak, eat the scroll.
- *Everything* is a message.
- Flattery *will* get you nowhere.
- Actions can speak truth.
- How we react today is our future.

The main concern of the literary prophets

- Though the emphasis in all the literary prophets is on things that will happen during or shortly after the present timeline, since the Literary prophets words were written down, the idea developed that prophecies could be fulfilled more than once.
- From the passages we reviewed today is clear that *the main concern of the prophets was how people live, what they value, and how the choices we make now determine what happens to us later.*

Dr. Keith Lloyd
Professor of English
Kent State University Stark
kslloyd@kent.edu

- So...
- What will you miss when you die?
- What are you living for?

Image Citations not on slides

- Rose colored glasses
- [The Democrats delusional rose colored glasses ...commdiginews.com](#)
- Wall collapse
- [Blast destroys wall of ancient Syrian fortressjinsight.com](#)
- Ezekiel Images
 - On side <https://thebarkingfox.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/bfb141028-ezekiel-on-his-side.jpg?w=300&h=225>
 - Eats scroll
 - https://uponobservingthis.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/img_8036.jpg